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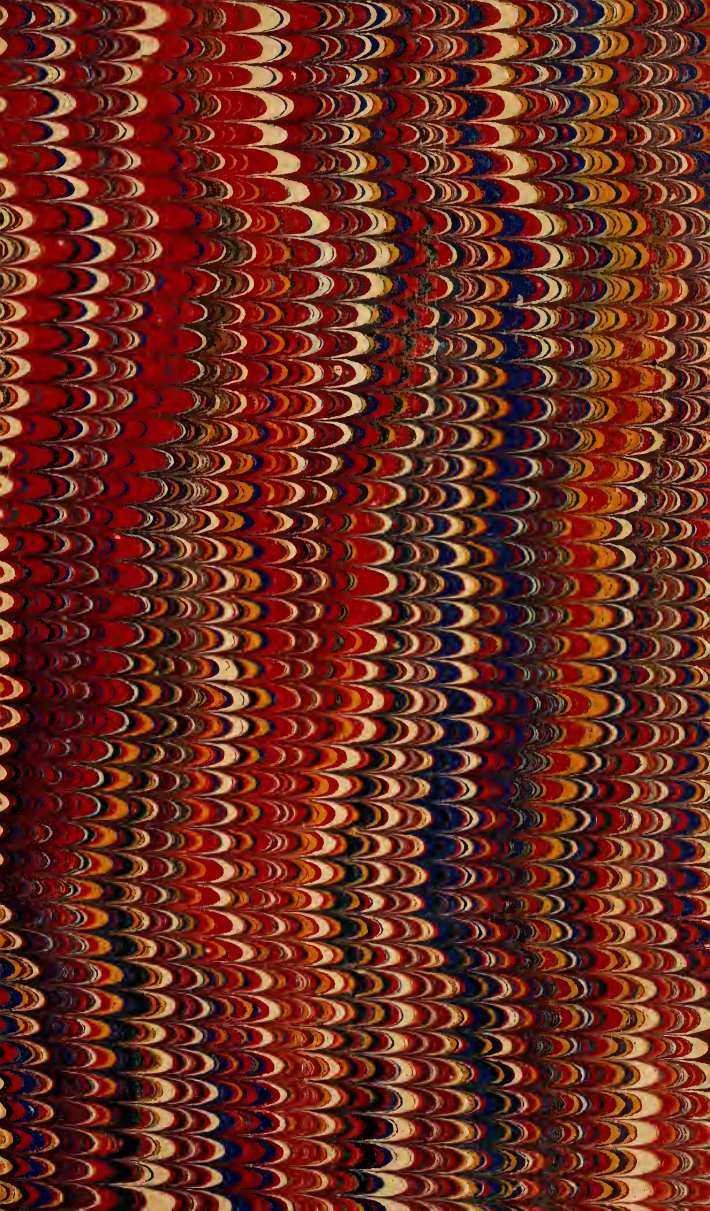


Chap. 33

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T H E
LEGEND OF HOB-OR-NOB;

A
COMICAL POEM;

BY
REUBEN LINGERLONG, Esq.

James M. Carpenter.



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P R E F A C E .

DEAREST READER : 'Tis the custom in presenting a new book,
To assign some potent reasons, and, indeed, the people look
In the prefatory chapter, and there often find named o'er
Startling facts and shining wonders, such as they've not seen before.
Something I, who am a novice, will not even try to do ;
Still, with all becoming rev'rence, would I make my bow to you,
And would humbly state, and briefly, ere my story I commence,
That I make no claim to learning, genius, wit, or extra sense.
'Tis for others to boast gifts like these, and use them well who can—
Let them soar in grand, spread-eagle style, I'm but "a plain, blunt man."
While no lofty flights I choose to take, still I will write my views,
I will make my rhymes in my own way—I aim but to amuse.

No lengthy preface I will write, as most have done before ;
Some of my leading characters I merely will name o'er.

My Barney's a small Irishman, bow-legged, cross-eyed, queer ;
And Deacon Jones a grave old man, who loves his—lager beer ;
Then there's O'Kahn, a portly man, who groceries keeps to sell—
O'Kahn is an old bachelor, as you will learn full well.
Mousetraps he makes to catch the mice that steal cheese from his shelf ;
He traps the mice, and traps the rats, and, lastly, traps—himself.

And then there is the village belle, whose fame is far and wide,
While broken hearts and broken necks she leaves on ev'ry side ;
A beauty of the sparkling sort—gay, dashing, reckless, fast—
Who, sure, but Barney is the man who settles her at last !

With characters like these, I think, it will be strange indeed—
Unpardonable, that is it—if I do not succeed.
That I shall win I think is sure, and plain quite to the view ;
I have no doubts at all myself, nor do I think have you.
Let this much suffice for preface, and herewith wind up my song.
I am your most humble servant,

Truly,

REUBEN LINGERLONG.

OWL BRANCH, PLATTE COUNTY, MISSOURI,
August, A. D. 1870.

THE LEGEND OF HOB-OR-NOB.



CANTO I.

In a fine country town, in the land of the West,
Where all were with peace and prosperity blessed;
Where most people flourished by all sorts of dicker—
Some traded in dry goods, but all dealt in liquor;
Where were beautiful girls, fat and plump, tall and slender;
And where the young men often got on a bender;
Where the lads were all men, nor their dads durst restrict
 'em,
But just let 'em run, and but quite seldom licked 'em;
In this very fine town, I would have your attention,
Occurred some events, which I'll hereafter mention.
As tippling was always a principal job,
This town was well known by the name Hob-or-Nob.

Here lived Deacon Jones, both a saint and a sage,
And perhaps the most wonderful man of his age;
Much distinguished, not only for wisdom and learning,
For his soundness of judgment and ready discerning,
But, let here be added, in endless variety,
All the rare christian graces and "most godly piety."

Was there any one sick, or was any one dead,—
 Any thing of importance to be done or said,—
 Deacon Jones was soon called on by all near at hand,
 To advise, sympathize, scrutinize, or command,
 Just accordingly as, in each case, they might find
 There was needed the aid of the Deacon's great mind.
 Had a new preacher preached, soon all those within reach
 Were for knowing the Deacon's mind as to "the preach;"
 And, on any subject, but few told their own thoughts,
 Until they had first found out what Deacon Jones thought.

And oft when the women had met at a quilting,
 To talk over some little matter of jilting,
 If by chance a contention among them arose,
 Upon any grave question which we may suppose,—
 Such as who was the darkest, or fairest, or prettiest,
 Or the shortest or tallest, the wisest or wittiest;
 Whether Plunkins arrived in the spring or last fall;
 Whether he went with Miss Kittie Brown to the ball;
 Which was nicest of fashions, the old or the new;
 Whether Mis'ess Smith's baby had black eyes or blue,—
 The Deacon was called and decided the matter,
 And thus in no time put an end to their chatter;
 All firmly believing, if they did not know,
 That what Deacon Jones said must surely be so.
 Or if, by chance, the speckled hen
 Presumed to crow, some fair one then
 To Deacon Jones her way straight wended,
 To know what evil it portended;
 And what the Deacon chose to tell
 Had all the force of oracle.

And his dignified bearing as he traveled round,
 Filled the people on all sides with rev'rence profound ;
 Did he meet any rowdies in passing the street,
 Very solemn they looked, or would quickly retreat ;
 And the wild, crack-brained lads, who threw brick-bats and
 stones,
 All cooled down — “ mute as mice ” — when approached
 Deacon Jones.

Always eloquent—logical—great—in persuasion ;
 For a lecture he seldom missed any occasion.
 For the sake of the Savior who died on the cross,
 Thus to save us from sin when we should have been lost ;
 For the sake of a host of illustrious martyrs,
 Who had died for religion in different quarters ;
 For the sake of the great many blessings on earth,
 Which we all have enjoyed from the time of our birth ;
 On account of the great many sins we've committed,
 Which, in this land of Bibles, still oft are repeated ;
 For the prospect of Heaven, the dread fear of hell,
 And our wish that hereafter all things may go well,—
 He insisted that people all should be religious,
 And his zeal in the temperance cause was prodigious.

Yet it gravely was hinted that this Deacon Jones
 Might be not much more pious than some other ones,
 Who were, though much less gifted with speech and less noted,
 In their own humble way, more sincere and devoted.

And the guests who attended his holiday dinners,
 Both the ladies and gentlemen, both saints and sinners,

All reported—'tis true, too, yet is it not queer—
 That this same Deacon Jones dearly loved lager beer !
 Well, he liked "Scheidam Schnapps," also brandy and grog ;
 And, moreover, milk-punch, cherry-bounce, and egg-nog,
 And a few other things, which, as the report ran,
 He esteemed beneficial to the inner man.

CANTO II.

Now, in this same town lived one Michael O'Kahn,
 Who was scarce less distinguished—he was a great man—
 Great in size, great in purse, in his own estimation
 Great,—great in capacity for speculation ;
 A wealthy old bachelor, nearly three score,
 And proprietor of a large grocery store.

Though only a trifle above five feet tall,
 You could not from that once infer he was small,
 For, when he was weighed, all the good people wondered
 To see him pull down something over two hundred !
 He was both broad and thick, with a hump on his back,
 And was potbellied, too, yet there still seemed a lack
 In the size of the man to account for his weight,
 And as to this matter the mystery was great.
 Some thought—like the great strength of Samson—his hair
 Was the place where his weight lay, but others not there ;
 And that this opinion was not worth a fig,
 For he was baldheaded, and had on a wig ;
 Some thought his round shoulders, and still many more
 Thought that where the most bulk was—and that was be-
 fore !

But all these conjectures were sheer empty twaddle,
 With which no sane man should have puzzled his noddle—
 Mere idle aspersions, such as, in each State,
 Little, envious minds used to slander the great.

Though he was not built quite so tall and so slim,
 And was not, in his dress, quite so spruce and so trim
 As many young dandies you see on the street,
 Strutting, bowing, and nodding, and looking so sweet;
 Though quite fond of brandy, and great in a fight,—
 In which last amusement he took much delight,
 Often knocking men down to the left and the right;
 Though he boasted himself, without blushing or shame,
 That he frequented often a place of ill fame;—
 Yet his dignity cured all the first imperfections,
 And his wealth put an end to all other objections;
 He was highly received by the “very first classes,”
 And he cut quite a swell with the lads and the lasses.

To see him dressed out in a high-crown plug hat,
 A swallow-tail coat, and a jaunty cravat,—
 A long and tight jacket, and very tight breeches—
 All blue, with brass buttons, and some extra stitches—
 With a swaggering gait and a dignified air,
 Promenading the streets and gallanting the fair;
 ’Twas a scene at once bordering on the sublime,
 And not at all suited to my humble rhyme;
 One only a genius could safely pursue;
 But that “the world moved” was quite plain to the view,
 And a great deal of brandy and lager beer, too.

In his younger days he had been very poor,
 And, to raise himself up in the world, he then swore
 He would work and lay up with the greatest of care,
 And would get rich, in some way, by foul means or fair.
 With an unbounded stomach "to will and to do,"
 And the requisite strength, too, to carry him through,
 He first started peddling pins, needles, and rings,
 With jewsharps, tin whistles, and other such things ;
 And many tough yarns he would spin in those times
 To cheat the old women and take in the dimes,
 And woe to the man who made any expression,
 That seemed disrespectful to Michael's profession ;
 Such men Michael taught to be prudent and wise,
 By upsetting their noses and blacking their eyes.

For a long time he peddled from station to station,
 And always succeeded beyond expectation,
 Made a large sum of cash, most of which he paid down
 When he bought a grog-shop in the first-mentioned town.

Here, for several years, he scarce tasted the bottle,
 But played euchre, and poker, and—devil knows what all ;
 But whatever game he might happen to play,
 There was one thing quite certain, that he'd make it pay.

Then, Michael appeared in the height of his glory
 In telling a joke or a laughable story,
 Which done, he would shake his fat sides and laugh out
 Till all the by-standers would join in a shout ;
 Thus, in one way or other, he always was found
 To attract a large crowd of the tipplers around,

Who would still patronize him, although it was clear
That he both drugged and watered his whisky and beer.

Of these tipplers were men of the very first rank :
Merchants—owning large houses and funds in the bank ;
And lawyers—whose eloquence moved and astounded ;
Doctors, who'd performed cures of the sick and the
wounded

That were truly miracles, and who, 't was said,
Had even, in some cases, raised up the dead ;
Nice young gents—who could “shine” with the greatest
resplendence ;

Sturdy farmers, who boasted of their independence ;
All of whom Michael ruled by his comical magic
Till their money was gone, then the scene became tragic.

Then it mattered to him not how young or how old,
Nor as to the weather, how wet or how cold,
He would hustle them out of his shop by the dozen,
And cared not though they were killed, crippled, or frozen.

Then you might see those wretches, in different places,
Looking hungry and pale, having very long faces,
With faltering steps moving sadly about,
With their elbows, their knees, and their toes sticking out.
In this way great numbers of Michael's poor slaves,
Yearly sickened and dwindled to premature graves,
While some of more hardihood and greater pluck,
Would move still farther west, and again try their luck ;
There telling strange stories of losing their wealth
By the breaking of banks, accidents, and ill health,

By losses and crosses, by land and by sea,
But not hinting that they'd ever been on a spree.

But what signified it that many grew poor,
What they lost only served to increase Michael's store;
His fortunes advanced at so rapid a pace
That in wealth he was soon the first man of the place;
He "astonished the natives," and made them all stare,
When he bought a whole block near the public square.
Then his grog shop he merged in a grocery proper,
Built a very fine house, in dimensions a whopper;
A brick, of four stories, in every part
Finished off in the very best style of the art;
This he filled, and kept constantly ready for sale,
"Groceries of all kinds, both wholesale and retail."

Then some dozen hired men he kept always at hand,
Ever ready to go at their master's command;
Each of whom needed only a nod or a wink
To be off in a trot without stopping to think,
Much less say a word, or make any suggestion,
Any thing of this kind was clear out of the question;
Michael gave each his orders, and he must obey,
Without any argument, talk, or delay,
Or, if he did not, he'd the devil to pay—
Or, what many poor fellows dreaded much worse,
Was discharged in disgrace, with a blow or a curse;
Or, should not a man all his duties perform
Just to suit Michael's views, he would raise a great storm,
Curse and swear, tumble boxes and barrels around,
Until the whole building would fairly resound.

Yet in Michael the people found much to admire,
 He was treated and toasted, called "Colonel" and "Squire,"
 And praised and applauded by men in high station,
 As one of the very great men of the nation;
 So true it appears, if but rightly we scan,
 In the eyes of the world 'tis success makes the man.

Michael being thus firmly established in trade,
 And having already a large fortune made,
 Having worked and grown old, seeing little of pleasure,
 Resolved at odd times to indulge in some leisure;
 With this end in view, in one end of his house
 Fitted up a nice room, where, as snug as a mouse,
 Seated in an arm-chair, he would smoke his cigar,
 Quite free from all noise, or family jar:
 And then, in a corner, he always kept handy
 A huge demijohn, filled with excellent brandy.
 This demijohn, strangely enough, he called "Betty,"
 And though just a demijohn—not very pretty—
 Yet at times Michael—such was his odd notion—
 Looked on her with more than a lover's devotion.
 Of other admirers she'd sometimes a crowd,
 All of whom in her praises were both long and loud.
 E'en the good Deacon Jones oft would call in and lift her,
 And fill a large glass, and pour down him a snifter;
 His constant companion, 'twas through her rare merits,
 That Michael was commonly found in high spirits.

But, besides keeping up with the latest advances
 In prices and markets, he read some romances;
 Such as Sinbad the Sailor, and Gulliver's Travels,

And Arabian Nights, also "Old Women's Cavils,"
 The Ledger, and papers containing the news,
 And such other prints as seemed best to amuse ;
 Yet would often his practical mind revert thence,
 To things of more practical value and sense ;
 Then he'd study Fulton, and Franklin, and Morse—
 The wonders of lightning and the iron horse ;
 And think why could he not contrive in his mind
 Some similar work for the good of his kind.
 He'd no doubt the talent, but how to apply it,
 What object or in what direction to try it,
 Was long a sore puzzle that troubled his brain,
 As he thought it over and over again.
 At length, an idea that seemed most complete
 Presented itself, when he sprang from his seat,
 Bounded over the room, threw away his cigar,
 Kicked his demijohn over with thundering jar,
 Stumbled over the stove and fell down with such clatter,
 That people rushed in to see what was the matter ;
 When, raising himself, with a triumphant grin,
 "I've got it," said he, as he rubbed his bruised shin.

It occurred to his mind that the mice eat his cheese,
 And that an attempt he'd at once make at these,
 In which, though there might be some foolish dissenters,
 He would lay in the shade all the former inventors.

A mouse-trap, the object that he had in view,
 He hunted authorities both old and new ;
 He planned and contrived with the utmost of skill,
 Bored, hammered, and chiseled with hearty good will ;

Filed, turned, screwed and twisted, some twelve months,
not less,

When at last his great efforts were crowned with success;
And proud Michael felt that he'd thus gained the day,
When his trap caught some mice and the rest scared away.

This trap to describe I'll not even pretend—
It was something but few minds could well comprehend;
Intricate in details, and oft hard to define,
'Twere a difficult task e'en to give an outline,
But ingeniously wrought of wood, wire, screws, and nails,
'Twas designed to catch mice as they ran—by their tails!

That Michael outstripped the inventors aforesaid
Will be very plain without any thing more said,
If we but consider the facts in the case,
And the views entertained by great men of the place.
Having wisely looked over the list of inventions,
Considering their diff'rent designs and intentions,
Deacon Jones, and the rest of the Hob-or-Nob sages,
Swore that nothing in this, or in all the past ages,
That the cunning of man had made out to devise—
Of whatever shape, and regardless of size—
Big or little—round—oval—three-cornered—or square—
With Michael's mousetrap could begin to compare!

Then, it must be known, in his earlier days,
While Michael was peddling—in different ways,
On sundry occasions, and in divers places—
He made many enemies, chiefly those graces
And charmers of rural abodes, the old wives
And elderly maidens he met in his drives.

In their hatred of him these had been most tenacious,
 And some had made threats that were bold and audacious,
 Declaring that they, to avenge their great wrongs,
 Would use on him poking sticks, shovels, and tongs,
 And broomsticks, and other things used as defenses—
 They'd kill the old rascal, nor care for expenses !
 But was he ever caught in so dreadful a snap ?
 All their wrath was appeased by this magical trap !
 Which, besides freeing them from the presence of mice,
 They found to be otherwise useful and nice.
 It kept all the children from fretting and weeping ;
 When awake made them laugh, and assisted their sleeping.
 And thus in its usefulness it became double,
 Securing much gain, and preventing much trouble.
 And thus very popular Michael became
 With all the old women—all praised his great name,
 And many his portrait hung up in their houses—
 The Pleaser of Children—the Scarer of Mouses !

CANTO III.

So favored was Michael by fortune and fame,
 Possessed of vast riches, an immortal name,
 And all things to gratify human ambition,
 Yet was not quite satisfied with his condition ;
 But now, at this very late day of his life,
 Wanted just one thing more, and that was a wife.

So being inclined, he dressed up in his best,
 And marched out through the town—to the east, to the west,
 To the north, and the south—and by turns circled round
 Wherever he thought that a wife might be found.

Found many fine ladies, of course, but none still
 That Mr. O'Kahn thought would just fill the bill ;
 With just one exception, a middle-ag'd dame—
 A bouncing "grass-widow"—McQuiggle by name.

This lady, indeed, was uncommonly fair ;
 Still looked rosy and fresh—blue her eyes, and light hair.
 Rather large and quite plump, having well-rounded arms
 And delicate hands ; and, to add to her charms,
 Wore a gaily-trimmed dress made of many a hue ;
 And cut somewhat short, it exposed to the view
 A pair of such ankles—two such pretty feet—
 White stockings and gaiters—all looking so neat ;
 Great was the sensation as she walked the street !

And Michael, beholding this exquisite sight,
 Was almost o'erpowered with ecstatic delight.
 Many queer, antic capers performed the ag'd boy :
 He jumped, danced, and whistled, and shouted for joy ;
 Then gazing some moments in mute admiration,
 He eagerly watched her to her destination—
 A house in the suburbs upon a plantation.

Here no lofty mountains, approaching the sky
 And bewild'ring the senses, appeared to the eye ;
 No broad, placid river, majestic and grand,
 Moving on to the ocean ; no desert of sand ;
 No roaring cataract stunning the ear ;
 No great seas or lakes—none of these things were here.
 No volcanoes, earthquakes, or uncommon thunders,
 Nor any other of nature's great wonders,

With which often poets and writers of fiction
 Seek to round off their tales and embellish their diction.
 Nor was there a mansion of stately dimensions,
 With lawns, parks, and fountains of equal pretensions ;
 But a plain Western place, having log-barn and stables,
 And dwelling the same, only planked at the gables.

This dwelling of logs was but one story tall—
 Three rooms served for parlor and kitchen and all ;
 All stood in a row, and a short distance thence,
 To the front, near the road, was a dingy plank fence.
 From the house to the road a rude pavement was made,
 And numerous locust trees made a good shade ;
 A few ornamental shrubs also were found,
 And great rows of bee gums were sitting around.

Not far to the rear of this house one might see
 The still erect trunk of an ancient oak tree,
 Where often at night, in his favorite strain,
 An old forest-ranger would sit and complain,
 Emitting so doleful and solemn a sound
 That all hearts were filled with a dread most profound.

He used a strange language—none knew its intent,
 Or well could make out what the old fellow meant.
 He seemed to be cursing the whole Yankee nation,
 And damning the progress of civilization !

Still louder he'd grow, making all things resound,
 Till at length, swelled with anger, approaching the ground,
 In less than no time he'd be " playing the dickens,"

And killing the widow's young turkeys and chickens !
 The widow would scream, and the chickens would squall,
 But to both he would pay no attention at all ;
 Disregarded the cries of the fair and the fowl,
 He was very well known by the name of Hoot Owl !

Still looking ahead, a short distance beyond,
 Adjoining a meadow, appeared a large pond,
 All filled up with bushes, and briers, and logs,
 Where dwelt, it was said, a whole nation of frogs.
 All these were musicians, and always in spring
 They would sing an old tune which frogs only can sing.

When this fine old tune one no longer could hear,
 Still other fine melodies greeted the ear ;
 Crows, blackbirds, and robins—larks, blue birds, and jays,
 And other birds singing in different ways ;
 While, high above all, at approach of the morn,
 The “ Dominick ” rooster would wind his shrill horn ;
 Still higher and deeper, and longer and louder,
 More dignified, awful, sublimer, and prouder,
 The tone of a donkey that oftentimes brayed,
 Threw all other vocalists quite in the shade.

Though none of that “ circumstance, pomp, and parade,”
 Which even in Western homes, we see displayed,
 The widow's rude buildings and fences disclosed,
 Yet on this account it must not be supposed
 That the widow was poor—she still had a good share
 Of the substantial comforts, and even to spare.
 She owned her broad acres of land, rich and level,
 And feared neither constable, dun, nor—the devil !

Then the widow herself with her beauty and grace,
 At once both adorned and enchanted the place.
 Such was the effect of her strange fascination,
 That all things connected with her large plantation,
 Though rude or uncouth, in themselves seemed to wear
 A kind of soft, dreamy, and moonshiny air
 Of pastoral loveliness and quaint simplicity,
 Domestic contentment, and peace, and felicity,
 That banished at once every thought of rusticity.

Her cabins seemed elegant mansions,—her fowls—
 Her feath'ry legg'd chickens—frogs, donkeys, and owls,
 Geese, Guinea hens, and her whole musical throng,
 These were all pretty birds, of rare plumage and song !

In the days of her girlhood, a belle and coquette,
 She retained very much the same character yet.
 She had captured—soul, body, and breeches—a score
 Of handsome young men, who had never before
 Felt the thrilling effects of the tender emotion ;
 And then she quite suddenly took a strange notion,
 Discarded them all, and accepted one Barney
 McQuiggle, who lately had come from Killarney,
 Or Dublin, or Limerick, Kildare, or Dungannon,
 Or may be Kilkenny, or Cork, Ballyshannon,
 Or some other place, I'm not sure of the name
 Of the town or the place whence this lucky man came ;
 But suffice to call him a bold Irish rover,
 Who had just left the turf a few weeks and crossed over ;
 A little, bow-legged, cross-eyed Irish wight—
 'Twas thought that she married him merely for spite ;
 For dissatisfaction came on very fast ;

The nuptials once over, the honeymoon past,
 Still other desires in this lady's heart burned,
 Her passion for conquest and glory returned ;
 Her conjugal duties she oft would neglect,
 And treat her kind husband with but cold respect,
 While she looked love to these men, and smiled upon
 those,
 And shot killing glances at all her old beaux.

Said Barney, the lady he once thought he'd die for,
 Regarded him now only as a mere cipher ;
 "Indade" she had caused him to go almost crazy,
 And made him at all times feel "very unaisy."
 So once, on a very fine morning in June,
 He quietly bade her a good "afternoon ;"
 Said he'd go to the grocery and take a wee sup,
 And be "absint" a while and see what would turn up !

And suiting his actions to this same intent,
 Straightway to the grocery poor Barney went.
 And there, in an effort to make himself merry,
 He drank whisky, brandy, rum, gin, Tom-and-Jerry,
 Some of Dr. McDugan's fine bitters, egg-nog,
 And a few other fine preparations of grog ;
 Then of his misfortunes began to complain,
 Expressing himself in the following strain :
 "Bad luck to the day I consented to roam
 From my dear native counthry—my cheerful ould home—
 To be an exile in this heathenish land,
 Where troubles beset me on ivery hand ;
 Where rattlesnakes, lizards, big bullfrogs, and toads,
 Abound in the woods, and in all the highroads,

In every thoroughfare, alley and street,
 Obtrude their foul presence and squirm round my feet ;
 Where gnats, huge mosquitoes, and venomous flies,
 And other vile insects, fly into my eyes,
 With fiendish malignity buzz in my ears,
 And with their great bills—much resembling spears—
 Keep sthriking, and biting, and sthriking again,
 Until I am bleeding at ivery vein ;
 And where those most hideous monsters, the owls,
 With their loud, sepulchral, and unearthy howls,
 Keep me, when awake even, in a slight scare,
 And, when I'm aslape, give me constant nightmare ;
 But, O ! worst of all, is my anguish of mind,
 When I know my Katrina has proven unkind ! ”

Still tippling, and still thus lamenting his fate,
 He lingered until in the evening late,
 Then, staggering off, disappeared from the view,
 But whither he went there was no one who knew.
 And after the people who lived in that section,
 Had made full inquiries in ev'ry direction,
 Rode, hunted, and scoured the neighborhood round,
 Still no indications of Barney were found !

CANTO IV.

Now, there was an old Indian who lived near this place,
 And the only one, too, who was left of his race ;
 He, for some unknown reason, continued to stay
 After all other redskins had long passed away.

He was called "Indian John," and was known far and near,
As a very great hunter of turkeys and deer.

In this one line of business he seemed most astute,
He was commonly dressed in a full buckskin suit,
Just excepting his cap which was made of a coon skin;
And he roamed through the woods, both by daylight and
moonshine,

With an old rusty gun—an old fashioned flint lock,
'Twas a plague of a gun—lock, and barrel, and stock,
But it still mattered not, for with this same old gun,
He would kill game of all kinds where white men found
none;

The report, often made, of no game, was exploded
When old John would come in, for he always came loaded.

But one time, some months after the singular event
Just related of Barney—when, to some extent,
The excitement occasioned thereby had subsided,
But when still on this subject men's minds were divided—
This old hunter came into the town on a run,
Having neither his game, nor his favorite gun;
Bareheaded, his hair streaming out to the wind,
His 'coon skin cap even had been left behind!

All the people who witnessed this very strange sight,
Laughed at seeing old John in so dreadful a fright;
But their laughter was changed to a different sound,
When he told them the news—the "long lost" he had
found;

Near the great falls of Goose Creek, upon some large
stones,

In a scattered condition, lay poor Barney's bones !
 All his flesh decomposed—they lay bleaching—all bare,
 'Twas a horrible sight, one to make a man stare !

This amazing report, so brought in by old John,
 Was no sooner received than 'twas acted upon.
 A great number of citizens started apace,
 And proceeded to follow him straight to the place—
 The good old Deacon Jones being close in the lead,
 And inciting the rest to all possible speed.

Deacon Jones tripped along, scarcely touching the
 ground,
 Like a boy, he cleared ditches and bogs at a bound.
 Some thought, from the skill he displayed as a jumper,
 That just before starting he'd taken a bumper
 Of the learned Doctor Q. Rall's "Destroyer of Pain,"
 Which, besides curing all, made the old young again !

All kept striding along, at a blustering rate,
 Till they reached the supposed place of poor Barney's fate.
 There they found the remains of some singular creature,
 Of a doubtful description of form, face, or feature ;
 It was all so decayed—looked so odd, and, withal,
 The whole skeleton seemed so exceedingly small,
 As to make it a question of human at all.

And, in fact, a schoolmaster, whose name was Doolittle,
 A tall, queer-looking wretch, while he owned he knew
 little,
 Still "supposed if the bones that were found in that place,
 Were the bones of a man, it must be a new race."

So they would have been left as some animal's bones,
But there chanced to be present the wise Deacon Jones.

The old Deacon was of quite a different notion,
While apparently filled with profoundest emotion,
He just gave the poor pedagogue one with'ring look,
And at once he turned pallid—he trembled and shook—
And, as if overpowered with shame or affright,
Sneaked away from the crowd and was soon out of sight.

Then the Deacon pronounced him a blockhead egregious,
Said his views were absurd, profane, sacrilegious,
Were irrev'rent to God, a disgrace to humanity,
And excusable only on grounds of insanity !

Further : “ though an anatomist, learned at that,
Having got many books on the subject quite pat,
Yet by no means it follows that he is omniscient,
All book learning is worthless where sense is deficient.
Good, old-fashioned, plain sense ('twas with emphasis said)
Still should guide all our acts, toward living and dead,
Whatever the circumstance or situation
Presented to us for our consideration.

“ To decide on the matter now under inspection,
Needs a little good sense, and calm, sober (?) reflection.
There are men of a great many races and kinds,
Greatly differing in bodies as well as in minds,
Ev'ry race after its own particular fashion,
As the Malay, the Negro, the Indian, Caucasian,
The Asiatic race, and, perhaps, in some places,
Other men not included in all of these races.

“ Then, among the same races, observe in each nation,
 The great difference of color, and size, and formation.
 Just, for instance, of those who profess to be white,
 How unlike their complexions appear to the sight !
 Then look at the difference in Indians and Niggers,
 Including the Hottentots, Chinese, and Diggers !

“ But of all men on earth, that have yet come to light,
 Irrespective of color—red, brown, black, or white
 And regardless of size—little, big, short, or tall,
 Still the Irishman stands the most peculiar of all !
 Peculiar in speech, in his manner of thinking,
 His tastes, his amusements, his eating and drinking,
 In all of his acts, in whatever vocation,
 Performance, or exercise, or operation,
 Peculiar in ev’ry appearance without,
 And therefore internally, there is no doubt ;
 Our anatomy here has no more application
 Than our almanacks do in the most distant nation ! ”

The deacon still further proceeded to say
 That he very well knew the deceased in his day,
 And that he was satisfied, quite to his liking,
 His remains a resemblance bore that was most striking.

His masterly logic made all minds agree,
 All, too, the resemblance now plainly could see,
 And, as this grave subject they all pondered o’er,
 Each wondered at being so stupid before.
 So, without further talk, the remains they had found
 Were collected, encoffined, and placed in the ground.

CANTO V.

The Lady Katrina, 'tis said, dropped a tear,
 And dressed in full mourning the space of a year ;
 Then, as she was wont at an earlier day,
 She again was the gayest of all of the gay.
 And again, as before, by her coquettish action,
 Still she turned the men's heads, even unto distraction !
 Indeed, it was said she had been instrumental
 In causing some deaths that were called accidental.

Many years after Barney had wandered away,
 A nice, young French gentleman, handsome and gay,
 Who admired pretty women, fine horses and dogs,
 And was known to possess a keen relish for frogs,
 Impressed with a view of the fine situation,
 Would frequently call at the widow's plantation,
 And sometimes spend a week betwixt hunting and courting,
 And in fishing, and frogging, and other rare sporting,
 Which, at least in his fancy, if not in reality,
 Could be found nowhere else but in that one locality.

In his dress, and his bearing, too, rather a dandy,
 In gallanting the widow he seemed very handy ;
 All the country boys viewing him as a great swell,
 Would remark that he " walked like he had corn to sell."

For some months the young Frenchman appeared very jolly,
 And it was then observed that he seemed melancholy,
 And not long after this dead enough he was found

In the frog pond aforesaid, apparently drowned ;
 This was one of the cases in which the fair name
 Of the widow was used as if she was to blame.

A long discussed question raised by this event,
 Was whether self murder, or mere accident ;
 But whatever people's opinions might be,
 There was one thing in which all the frogs could agree—
 They considered the Frenchman a monstrous transgressor,
 And their natural enemy, pest, and oppressor ;
 To know he was dead was enough, in what way
 He had died they cared not, so had nothing to say.

An old, esteemed preacher, long known in the place,
 At sight of the widow had fallen from grace ;
 Her exceeding rare beauty so addled his mind,
 That his bible and hymn-book at once he resigned,
 Quit his ev'ry day theme of salvation and glory,
 And said, come heaven, come hell, or come purgatory,
 If the angelic creature would let him address her,
 He would use all his talent and skill to possess her.

His earnest attentions at first were regarded
 With tokens of favor, then he was discarded.
 After this he was noticed to look pale and wan,
 His countenance vacant and quite woe-be-gone ;
 And he was observed, ev'ry once in a while,
 To talk to himself in a singular style,
 Very much like a man with delirium tremens,
 All his talk was of witches, ghosts, devils, and demons.

In a strange sort of rev'rie he'd saunter about,

Quite unconscious of all that was passing without,
 And thus he one day accidentally fell,
 And ended his pilgrimage in an old well ;
 A rather queer accident, which all the wise
 Could explain by a hint at the widow's fine eyes.

Moreover 'twas said her good neighbor, Squire Ruggles,
 Had got so wound up in her strange wiles and juggles,
 That no longer himself, steady, peaceful, and quiet,
 He behaved like some madman engaged in a riot ;
 He was constantly fretting and cursing and swearing,
 And raving and snorting and ripping and tearing ;
 With an oath and a threat to whatever he'd say,
 He first frightened his wife and his children away ;
 Then with mouth wide distended, and eyes all aglare,
 He hastily mounted upon his gray mare,
 (An old mare he'd set free on account of her age),
 And away went the squire in a terrible rage.

By the aid of two spurs and a couple of switches,
 He went charging over fences, and hedges, and ditches,
 Over woodland and cornfield and meadow and pasture,
 Still whipping and spurring, the farther the faster,
 And, at every jump, there proceeded a yell
 Unlike any other e'er heard out of hell ;
 Next day, some miles off, at the foot of a cliff,
 The squire and old mare were found—both cold and stiff.

CANTO VI.

All of these fatal incidents, and many more,
 That nobody ever had heard of before,
 Manufactured to order, and for the occasion,
 With a great deal of eloquence, force, and persuasion,
 Were related to influence Michael O'Kahn ;
 But he gave all to know they'd mistaken their man ;
 He was not to be scared by reported mishaps
 Of a frog-eating Frenchman, and other madcaps,
 Who had come to their ends like the preacher and squire,
 By indulging a foolish, presumptive desire.

As to the strange story about Barney's death,
 On this it was useless to spend a man's breath.
 A man of McQuiggle's diminutive stature,
 Together with his most impetuous nature,
 Was exposed to destruction in various ways,
 And but rarely attained the full length of his days ;
 So little one might well expect him to find
 Blown out of existence by each puff of wind ;
 Or, in crossing a brook, if he made the least blunder,
 As a natural consequence, he'd be swept under.

Michael one subject only would deign to consider,
 How he'd capture the peerless, delectable "*widder* ;"
 As in this his brave spirit could brook no delay,
 He resolved he would move on her works right away ;
 Heeding nobody's warning, advice, or instruction,
 He observed not the forms of genteel introduction,
 But regardless of all that could be said or done,

He straightway set forward, afoot and alone !
 He marched on—right onward—his steps being rapid—
 His mien most majestic—his bearing intrepid—
 A hero, indeed, he appeared—nothing less—
 Bent on some great adventure, and bound for success ;
 With brass buttons glitt'ring, borne out by the wind,
 His swallow-tail coat flickered gaily behind !

And, very soon nearing the widow's plantation,
 He wore such an aspect of determination—
 Of liquor and lager beer—love and devotion—
 He set ev'ry thing in a fearful commotion !
 The Guinea fowls gave the first note of alarm,
 And at once flew away as if fearing some harm.
 This was soon followed up by the rest of the fowls,—
 Geese, and turkeys, and chickens, and even the owls
 Went fluttering off as if seeking a shelter
 From instant destruction—"pell mell, helter skelter !"
 A savage old bulldog that commonly lay
 By the gate, near the road, and kept all things at bay,
 Seeing Michael, was suddenly filled with dismay,
 And, tucking his tail, he went sneaking away !
 Donkey gave just one bray that resembled a groan,
 And then he took his leave for some region unknown !
 Horses stuck up their heads, and their tails—ran and
 sported—
 Shied around, looking wild—trotted high—neighed and
 snorted—
 And, clearing the fence, with the speed of the wind
 They all galloped off, never looking behind !

The widow now cautiously opened the door,

And, looking much paler than ever before,
 Stood in speechless astonishment at the confusion
 Occasioned by Michael's unlooked-for intrusion ;
 Till Michael approached toward her, hat in hand !,
 And, bowing profoundly, in accents most bland,
 Introduced himself thus : " There's no cause for alarm—
 It is not my intention to do any harm—
 I design to hurt nothing—take no creature's life—
 I am Michael O'Kahn,—merely hunting a wife !
 This is the sole object which I have in view
 In thus unexpectedly calling on you.

" If my self-introduction requires explanation,
 You'll permit me to tell you I hate ostentation ;
 I despise the formalities, fool'ries, and fictions—
 The absurd regulations, and senseless restrictions—
 Observed by the coxcombs, snobs, and popinjays,
 In matters of courtship in these latter days !
 I regard not their rules, and care not what is said—
 I'm a plain business man, and go right straight ahead—
 Without any useless parade, pomp, or potter—
 In the business of courting as in any other."

Ere Michael could get his speech fully completed,
 He was stopped by the widow, who bade him be seated,
 And then said : " Well now, my dear Mister O'Kahn,
 It does seem to me you are such a queer man—
 To be making apologies, when I would say
 The apologies all should be made 't'other way.
 Sir, indeed, I am willing to own up, downright,
 My behavior to you has been quite impolite—

To stand in my own door for five minutes, and stare
 At a stranger, and not speak, nor hand him a chair—
 It was gross impoliteness, and cruel neglect;
 But, believe me, I did this through no disrespect.
 However improper my conduct may seem,
 I merely was musing upon a strange dream,
 Which as I lay sleeping last night did transpire,
 And has since filled my mind with forebodings most dire.

“The scene appears vividly still to my view.
 A fine, portly gentleman—not unlike you—
 Had been waiting on me, and, in view of marriage,
 We chanced to be riding out in a fine carriage
 Drawn by elegant steeds, that moved proudly and fast,
 When the sky became suddenly all overcast
 With thick murky clouds—thunders roared—lightnings
 flashed—
 The wind blew—splinters flew,—while around the limbs
 crashed;
 And, amid the great gloom overspreading creation,
 Living creatures of all kinds, in sad consternation,
 While apparently hunting a place of protection,
 Ripped and tore—ran and scampered—in ev’ry direction.

“And one thing, in particular, I saw in my dream—
 Just before us there moved a continuous stream
 Of small quadrupeds—I believe mice and rats—
 Fleeing as if pursued by an army of cats!
 Sir, they covered the road—and they clogged up the
 wheels—
 And at times almost deafened my ears with their squeals!

“Then I saw a grim monster, of singular shape—
In his size and appearance, half human half ape!
He disputed our passage, and seemed in high dudgeon—
Throwing at us a bottle now, and then a bludgeon!

“I was scared as I hope again never to be,
Until finally roused by an owl in a tree.
He poured forth his ominous notes, without number,
Thus suddenly waking me from my dread slumber.
And I feel grateful yet to the old chicken thief
For his being the instrument of my relief!

“On awaking, I found myself in a sad fright—
Was unable to sleep for the rest of the night.
I felt sorely alarmed till the dawn of the day,
When I grew calm again—all my scare passed away.
But again, at a time just about your arrival,
My fears, from some cause, took a sudden revival.
I was not scared at you, of course, Mr. O’Kahn—
I was never yet known to be scared at a man!

“The stampede, I suppose, started first from the owls,
Or some other wild varmints pursuing my fowls.
What the cause was I know not—you saw what occurred—
It just beat any thing ever I saw or heard;
It put fresh in my mind what I saw in my dream;
I was scared, the Lord knows, and I tried hard to scream;
But, merciful heaven!—no sound could I utter,
Except a mere whisp’ring,—inaudible mutter.

“And I feel fearful yet that the trouble’s not ended—

That some danger is threatened—some evil portended—
 Some loss, inj'ry, accident, death, or disgrace,
 Foreshadowed, that's destined ere long to take place.
 Whether great swarms of rats will invest my plantation,
 And by wasting my substance bring me to starvation—
 Or whether that monster that caused me such fright,
 Will shortly waylay me, and kill me outright—
 Or whether I'm doomed to some other disaster,
 Or to some deserved punishment from the great Master—
 He who knows all our secrets alone may foresee,
 But my dream forebodes something, it does seem to me.

“Now, Mr. O’Kahn, I would ask if this view
 Of things don’t appear very likely to you;
 Or is it a mere idle freak of a woman’s?
 Do you ever have dreams?—do you b’lieve much in
 omens?

Pray, give the result of your investigations
 In the matter of omens and prognostications.
 Don’t you think that my dream conveys some dreadful
 warning?

Or was it fulfilled by the scene of this morning?”

“I’m no doctor,” said Michael, “but then ’tis no question,
 Frightful dreams are a consequence of indigestion;
 And so, in most cases, therefore, I would guess,
 Mean, we’ve eaten too much—nothing more, nothing less.

“I once dreamed I went to the infernal regions,
 And fought against Satan and all of his legions;
 Had a long and hard fight, and came off second best,

Got my neck broke, and waked feeling greatly distressed ;
 Scarce could tell which extremity of me was upper—
 All from eating too many cold dumplings for supper.

“Cold dumplings!”—the widow now took up the strain—
 “Cold dumplings! I’ll never eat any again!
 Cold dumplings! Jerusalem! may I be shot
 If I’m found eating dumplings again—cold or hot!
 I had dumplings for supper, but, having dined late,
 I eat just a few—only seven or eight—
 And this was the cause of my awful nightmare,
 And daymare, I s’pose too—’twas all the same scare.
 Frightened till I was speechless, and barely could see—
 To the devil with dumplings hereafter for me!

“But I feel so relieved now, dear Mister O’Kahn—
 Deacon Jones always said you were such a great man ;
 I’ll feel grateful to you to the last generation,
 For this kind, timely, simple, yet sage explanation.
 And, if you’re in earnest, when I’m fully righted—
 Be assured that your claims shall by no means be slighted.”

The widow, now wearing her cheeriest smile,
 Looked so innocent, artless,—so free from all guile,
 That Michael felt sure the tales told him before
 Were all villainous slanders—could be nothing more.

Her embarrassment o’er, she proceeded to chat
 On this thing, and t’other, and no matter what—
 On whatever subject—whatever she said—
 She so spoke and acted, so nodded her head,

That peculiar significance marked ev'ry word ;
 Such wit and such wisdom had seldom been heard ;
 Old stories, related by her, became new,
 And, more singular still, all her fictions seemed true !

Books she also produced, such as " Philander Doesticks,"
 " Sam Slick," " Davy Crockett," and " Devil on Two Sticks,"
 And many choice passages from them read o'er,
 In a style Michael never had witnessed before.
 And now and again, as the time passed along,
 She delighted his ears by rehearsing a song.
 Of songs of all sorts a great number she knew,
 And, withal, she could whistle—most charmingly, too.

On her singing his feelings grew stronger and stronger,
 When she whistled—he swore he could stand it no longer ;
 So he sprang to his feet, clapped his hands, gave a shout,
 And at once commenced dancing and bounding about.
 The style of his dancing was truly a wonder—
 It was upward and downward—now hither, now yonder—
 Presenting to view an unequaled progression
 Of strides, jumps, and tumbles, in rapid succession.
 Such whistling had seldom been heard, and, I ween,
 Such dancing in Hob-or-Nob had not been seen.

Michael seemed in the very perfection of bliss,
 Until accidentally stepping amiss,
 And losing his balance, it chanced that he blundered
 And upset a bee-gum. The bees, by the hundred,
 Indignantly sallied, and quickly gave chase,
 And 'lighting on Michael, stung him in the face.

Michael stopped just a moment, and, scratching his head,
 He merely said, "d—n the luck!"—nothing more said,—
 Until he instinctively took to his scrapers—
 He ran and he scampered—cut all sorts of capers—
 He raved, yelled, and blustered, and snorted, and ranted,
 And finally swore the plantation was haunted.

But with each commotion, whatever the form,
 The saying holds good, a calm follows a storm.
 So Michael's excitement, though great, soon passed o'er,
 And he seated himself where he had sat before,
 And there calmly mused on the turns and rotations
 Of human existence, in all its gradations.

He tried to seem quiet, and even look wise,
 But the bees had stung him, so his passion would rise ;
 The belligerent hive he then took in short meter,
 The honey was sweet, but the widow looked sweeter ;
 And thinking of what he'd passed through for the one,
 For the other he vowed he'd leave nothing undone.

Though his face was all swelled up and caused him great
 pain,
 He determined that he would not grieve or complain ;
 Though his stylish plug hat had been smashed, soiled, and
 spattered,
 And his flaming blue pants also grievously tattered,
 And his swallow-tail coat slightly torn in the jungle,
 Still he'd bear all of this, and would not make a bungle ;
 By such trifles as these he would not be defeated,
 But would boldly push on till his work was completed.

Disregarding the direful mishaps of the day,
 His mood at once changed to be cheerful and gay,
 Even comical, sometimes, and when this was spent all,
 He was solemn by turns, and by turns sentimental ;
 Yet, in all of these turns, he was very loquacious,
 Talked of money, and lands, and of rooms that were
 spacious ;

He related at length, and with infinite zest,
 All his great ups and downs since he'd come to the West ;
 Told of hardships encountered, of terrible scrapes,
 Of his daring adventures, and hair-breadth escapes ;
 How he'd overcome some things, and some passed un-
 heeded,

But, in one way or other, had always succeeded ;
 From all of which, as may be readily guessed,
 The widow could not but be deeply impressed.
 She felt from her fate there could be no exemption,
 She was gone, taken, captured, beyond all redemption ;
 So, with uplifted eyes, in a voice the most tender,
 She said " Mr. O'Kahn, I can only surrender."

Vows of mutual love were made soon after this,
 And their joy appeared radiant—great was their bliss ;
 But here, let me say, it is not my intention,
 The hugging and kissing which followed to mention.

Michael's mind seemed so greatly overcome with emotion,
 And his thoughts so much taken up with the one notion,
 That, on leaving, unconscious of what he was at,
 He wore off a small bee-gum instead of his hat.

After Michael's own motto—"No useless delay,"
 This fine couple were married the very next day.
 And upon the same day, at a rather late hour,
 They were seen starting out on a grand bridal tour ;
 A kind of flank movement of Michael's, you see,
 To avoid what was brewing—a loud "shiveree."

CANTO VII.

Michael's carriage they rode in deserves a brief mention,
 'Twas a wonder of workmanship, and the invention
 Of its gifted owner, who superintended
 Its entire construction, until it was ended ;
 Then, with his wonted skill, perseverance, and zeal,
 Scrutinized all its workings, turned round ev'ry wheel ;
 And such was its perfection in form, such its action,
 That he long stood and viewed it with proud satisfaction.

What, although this carriage presented to view
 Some things that appeared rather striking and new,
 As a box of unusual dimensions, and springs
 That looked odd to persons unskilled in such things ;
 Genius is not confined by a set of fixed rules,
 Or our greatest inventors had died greatest fools.

And what, though there were in the town many croakers,
 Busybodies and wags, and impertinent jokers,
 Who brought all their powers to bear to make fun
 Of this carriage, and Michael, for what he had done ;
 Some pretending to think that it looked like a boat,
 And then asking the workmen how soon it would float ;

With other unlikely and unmeaning questions,
 Absurd inuendos, and senseless suggestions.
 What conclusion, I ask, could be drawn from all this ?
 Could it well be inferred aught had been done amiss ?
 All their gibberish was settled when old Deacon Jones,
 In his loud, commanding, and dignified tones,
 Cried, "avaunt, ye vile jesters ! at once get ye hence ;
 'Tis a most splendid carriage, but ye've got no sense."
 And then the said jesters all quickly subsided ;
 Most, indeed, turned and praised it, none longer derided.

As for Michael himself, he cared never a cent ;
 He had won the fair widow, and was quite content.
 So he merely pronounced, " All aboard ; clear the track !"
 And he turned to the crowd of spectators his back.
 Two spirited steeds, which this vehicle drew,
 Started off with a bound ; fast around the wheels flew ;
 Over hill, dale, and valley, o'er prairie and mead,
 The carriage rolled on with incredible speed.
 Gaily chattered the lady, and tittered, and snickered,
 While her ribbons and laces rare fluttered and flickered ;
 And gay, too, was Michael, and great was his pride
 As he gazed on the charms of his beautiful bride ;
 And as they pushed on, with a jump and a jingle,
 His heart throbbed aloud, while with joy it would tingle.

Thus they rode, and kept riding, till they chanced to find
 The place they had started for—left far behind ;
 A farm-house which, now many miles to the rear,
 Looking back o'er their route, they saw dimly appear,

Standing just at the furthestmost edge of a prairie,
 In a cluster of trees—mostly locusts, some cherry ;
 Upon which the fair bride, though disdaining to fret,
 Could not yet help feeling some pangs of regret ;
 For 'twas there lived her aunt, and her nearest connection,
 Who of old had regarded her with much affection.
 She had not seen her aunt for a very long while,
 But had learned she was wealthy, and lived in grand style ;
 Owned a beautiful place, shrubs and flowers a variety,
 All selected with taste and arranged with propriety ;
 Then, no doubt it was quiet, and, from its seclusion,
 Was the place of all places most free from intrusion.

What was best, in this case, truly they did not know,
 For already the sun had descended so low
 That, were they disposed now to take the back track,
 Time to make their return they seemed sadly to lack.

Michael then studied, mused, meditated, and pondered,
 Looked around and about him, and fretted, and wondered ;
 And what to do, really, he could not think ;
 He at last drew a bottle and took a big drink ;
 And his gentle bride, also, he begged to be treated,
 And she took a small taste, and the same was repeated.

After this, Michael's spirits seemed greatly to mend,
 And it flashed o'er his mind that he had an old friend,
 One 'Squire Mulligan, who it appeared to him clear,
 From the looks of the country, must live somewhere near.

So Michael pressed on, and soon came on the night,
 Yet 'Squire Mulligan's residence came not in sight ;

Neither house or log cabin, hut or habitation,
 Nor sign, mark, or token of human creation,
 Save and except only a dim, narrow track,
 Leading on through a jungle of scrubby "blackjack."
 A rather dark prospect ! but soon the full moon
 Arose in her glory, and then 'twas in June,
 And the weather was pleasant. All nature seemed still,
 Just excepting the hoot of an owl, and more shrill,
 And yet sad, plaintive notes of a "lone whippowil."

And now Michael, who must have been pretty well muddled,
 Drank again, and was soon most decidedly fuddled.
 And he chuckled, and looked on his bride with a smile,
 And then talked to his horses about in this style :
 "Get up, boys ; get up—can't you strike up a canter ?
 By the powers, your master, old Michael's a ranter !
 Get ye out of this !—out !—out !—away !—get away !—
 Bound for Mulligan's, sure, if it takes us till day !"
 And, soon after this, he whooped, holloed, and swore so,
 One horse became furious—t'other much more so,—
 And right on, like a whirlwind, they went, nor once stopped,
 While the fire flew, and brush cracked, and jack-oak trees
 popped !

And there now came a trouble surpassing all yet,
 Soon, in making a turn, this grand carriage upset !
 And—O ! saddest of evils !—O ! strangest mishap !—
 Fastened up this nice couple as if in a trap !
 And the horses, unloosed by the mischief they'd done,
 Never halted at all, but kept thundering on.

Though dire was the accident, nothing was broke—
 Said couple sat silent, and not a word spoke.

•

Yet Michael the state of things very soon learned,—
 This sobered him soon, soon his senses returned ;
 And musing, the cause of the trouble to find,
 The truth very forcibly came to his mind,
 That the present misfortune to him and his wife,
 Was traceable to the great work of his life,
 His famous mousetrap, and the singular action
 It had on his mind, causing partial distraction,
 To such a degree that, though he had intended
 Quite a different thing, in a trap it had ended !
 And now he remembered one curious spring,
 Which there could be no doubt had produced the whole thing !
 And, as he thus mused, he most sorely lamented
 That a mousetrap or carriage he'd ever invented—
 Better had he from fame and distinction refrained,
 And in quiet obscurity always remained.
 But it now mattered nothing to grieve o'er the cause,
 Since there, trapped, was his lady, and there, too, he was.

Still for this fated couple,—so trapped, so belated,
 Greater troubles arose—still new dangers awaited.
 Michael, on peeping out, unmistakably saw
 Satan's self coming up—singing Erin Go Bragh !
 That this was the case, he could scarce be mistaken,
 And his next thought was how he should best save his bacon !
 And now he remembered—his life passed away—
 What a sinner he'd been—still knew not how to pray.
 And a pray'r at this time would be mere idle humming—
 It were doubtless too late—when the devil was coming !
 Then thought he, indeed, what a great consolation
 Deacon Jones would have been in this dread tribulation !

But things were as they were, and he'd just 'wait advances,
And like a brave man, as he was, take his chances.

His Satanic Majesty meantime drew nigher,
But, on observation, appeared scarcely higher
Than Michael himself, and of what kind of stuff
He was made it seemed doubtful—looked natural enough !
But then, on the whole, rather slender and pale ;
And, moreover, he showed neither horns nor a tail,
As from time out of mind had to him been imputed,
And, as seemed settled doctrine, had not been refuted.

Wherefore now did Michael begin straight to cavil,
And doubt if, indeed, it could be the true devil.
At least, he thought there could be nothing amiss
In asking one question,—that question was this :
“ What strange, spectral sight is it doth so amaze us ? ”
“ Plaze yer honor, I'm Barney McQuiggle, be Jazus ! ”
This was the brief answer—at once there ensued
A scene such as mortal eyes seldom have viewed !

It is very common—and has been for ages—
To see the wild beasts tearing round in their cages,
Impotently endeav'ring with paws, teeth, and snout,
To demolish their prisons, get free, and come out,
Until, wearied out and exhausted, with pain
And sadness they sink down in silence again.
Such scenes are quite common, all over the nation,
But then this were but a weak representation
Of the noise and the clatter, the hustle and bustle,
And the showing of courage, of nerve, and of muscle,

Which, after this answer, there followed instanter,
Evinced that Michael indeed was a ranter !

Now, within this strange trap there was heard a great
gnashing
Of teeth—then a terrible dashing and thrashing,
As Michael went lunging and plunging around
'Gainst its sides, and still followed a fearful rebound,
Which now and again made the earth fairly tremble,
Distant thunder the noise that was made did resemble ;
And then quaked every timber, and tenon, and mortise,
And Michael moved off the whole thing—like a tortoise !
Soon an op'ning appeared, and then, in a style odd, he
Skedaddled ! —his motto now—" Legs, save my body ! "

To return to the lady, she fainted, of course,
Took a " duck fit " or two, and came to—nothing worse.
And quickly again did her spirits revive,
When Barney informed her he still was alive.
Yes, Barney ! the gallant lad from Tipperary !
Kilmarnock, or Ballinasloe, Londonderry,
Or—the de'il take the place ! it was Barney, the rover,
Whose birthplace was Erin—his home, the world over.
He assured her he still was hale, hearty, and merry,
In spite of the speeches made to the contrary
By " ould Jones, and the divil, and Michael O'Kahn,"
He still gloried in being a live Irishman.

And Barney's eyes twinkled as he, with a smile,
Still further proceeded to speak in this style :

"Sure, and was n't I scared, and afraid quite to once stir,
 And imperil me life with the bloodthirsty monster ;
 But 'tis plazed that I am, and 'tis plazing to see,
 That the crathur was none the less fearful of me.
 And now, me own dear, quit your coquettish tricks,
 And niver again get in such a queer fix ;
 Niver more get in anger, no more in a muddle,
 And as happy we'll be as two ducks in a puddle."
 To all which she consented, her hand and heart gave ;
 Now, success to this couple, "O long may " they "wave."

CANTO VIII.

Now, concerning the valorous Michael, 'tis said
 Matrimony again never entered his head.
 He arrived safe at home, and then lived quite retired ;
 Quit all thoughts of distinction ; to nothing aspired ;
 Drank his grog ; read the news, and spent much time in
 napping ;
 He abandoned at once and forever his trapping ;
 But retained his hostility to mice and rats,
 Wherefore he provided himself with some cats,
 Which cleared out the vermin within his dominions,
 And were his much cherished and valued companions.

Now, right in this place, would I gladly deem fit
 This narration to close, would the truth but permit.
 We mourn and lament, or in church or in state,
 With an uncommon grief, o'er the loss of the great ;
 And with tears, and with sorrow that pains e'en my bones,
 Do I now once more mention the great Deacon Jones,

Whose word was an oracle ; whose mighty will
 Had been both law and gospel in Hob-or-Nob, till
 Occurred the events which I have just related,
 And then, O, how fallen ! it scarce need be stated ;
 Malice, envy, and ridicule, all were let loose ;
 Old Jones was a humbug, imposter, old goose,
 And every thing mean that a human could be,
 The blockheaded pedagogue knew more than he ;
 The bones which had led to so awkward a scrape
 Were proved to be naught but the bones of an ape ;
 And, to cap all, now Barney, yes, Barney, the rover,
 Was with the same show when the "*baste*" was thrown over.

And now, for once, Hob-or-Nob got on a bender,
 The old and the young, and the fat and the slender,
 All sorts and all sizes, got on a grand spree ;
 And, surely, it was rather funny to see
 How very exceedingly jolly and frisky
 The Hob-or-Nob people could get on free whisky.
 The discomfited Michael now rolled out a barrel,
 And said, " Pitch in, boys, only don't fight or quarrel."
 To say they got drunk would be tame—they were glorious ;
 The noise they made, deafening, tremendous, uproarious ;
 And when it got late, and they needed repose,
 It was in this manner they came to a close :
 " Three cheers, now, for Michael O'Kahn, the great trapper !
 Three cheers, too, for Barney ! three cheers, each a whop-
 per !
 All very well done, my brave boys, now three groans,
 Three groans and a tiger, for old Deacon Jones !"



THE

LEGEND OF HOB-OR-NOB ;

A

COMICAL POEM ;

BY

REUBEN LINGERLONG, Esq.



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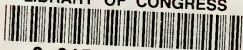








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